



## **FACILITY OF THE YEAR AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION**

The League of Agricultural and Equine Centers' Facility of the Year Award recognizes a League member facility that has demonstrated excellence in the management and operation of an equestrian/agricultural center. Facilities that host equine, agricultural and multi-use events are eligible. The League takes pride in its member facilities that excel in providing their communities with a safe and enjoyable space for all types of events and educational opportunities.

### **Application Requirements:**

Each application submitted will be eligible for consideration for a three year period. As an example, an application submitted for the 2019 award will remain in the application pool for 2020 and 2021 unless that facility wins or withdraws. No further action by the facility is required. However, applicants may update or modify their application prior to the annual submission deadline, e.g. 2020 and 2021.

Applicants must demonstrate how their facility excels in each of the four provided criteria:

- Operational Excellence (1,000 word maximum narrative)
- Team Building / Professional Development (500 word maximum narrative)
- Safety and Security (500 word maximum narrative)
- Service to the equestrian/agricultural community and the community at large (800 word maximum narrative)

Applicants must also provide a 300 maximum word concluding summary as to why their facility should be awarded The League Facility of the Year Award. Since applicants will only be scored on the above four criteria, the summary should not be based on any information outside that already provided.

The four criteria are a framework to demonstrate the ways in which the applicant has excelled in the performance of the facility and its operations. The facility must satisfy each of the four criteria to be considered for nomination.

Successful applications will succinctly illustrate specific examples of ways the facility excels in the criteria outlined above. The quality of the application, including writing style, clarity of narrative and use of relevant statistics, will be taken into consideration when scoring.

Applications must include photographs, with a maximum of 10 allowed. One photo must be of the exterior of the facility, and the others are left up to the applicant's discretion, e.g. a photo can highlight a program, event or renovation. Photos must be at least 300 dpi (print resolution), jpeg format and should have accompanying photo release form if necessary.

Applications must be submitted as a Word document or as a PDF attachment. Finalists may be asked to submit additional documentation, examples or images.

The completed application must be received by the League Executive Office no later than September 30.

### **Scoring:**

- 40% Operational Excellence which includes the following sub-categories: (1,000 word maximum narrative,) each subcategory narrative need not to be a specific length as long as it is no more than 1,000 words )
  - Customer Satisfaction
  - Sales and Marketing
  - Sustainability
  - Financial Integrity
- 20% Team Building/Professional Development (500 word maximum narrative)
- 20% Safety and Security (500 word maximum narrative)
- 20% Service to the equestrian/agricultural community and community at large (800 word maximum narrative)

### **Operational Excellence**

**Statement:** To operate equine and agricultural facilities effectively and to enhance the overall quality of life of citizens of their communities, facilities should value operational excellence and its many attributes.

**Objective:** To establish and maintain reliable operations and good standing within their communities, equine and agricultural facilities should be both visionary and strategic in the following areas:

- a) Customer satisfaction, to shape the facility's reputation.
- b) Sales and marketing, to attract clients, exhibitors and patrons.
- c) Sustainability, to become increasingly environmentally responsible.
- d) Financial integrity, to demonstrate commitment to ethical standards and honesty in working with the varied consumers the facility serves.

**Examples:** How does your facility meet the following operational attributes?

- a) Customer Satisfaction
  - i. How does your facility engage clients to service their needs and build relationships?
  - ii. What is your facility's process for obtaining client feedback?
  - iii. How does your facility initiate innovative concepts based upon feedback received?
  - iv. How does your facility tie client service to a performance management system?
- b) Sales and Marketing
  - i. Describe the sales and marketing strategies your facility has implemented to increase clients, exhibitors and attendees. How were those results measured?

- c) Sustainability
  - i. Describe a sustainable practice (standard, application of technology, process) currently in place to ensure your facility is being environmentally responsible.
- d) Financial Integrity
  - i. What innovative program has your facility introduced to improve your fiscal operations?

## **Team Building/Professional Development**

**Statement:** The performance of equine and agricultural facilities depends on the employees who work for the facility. Facility excellence is achieved by staff members who work well together, strive towards continuous education, stay current on industry trends and are able to motivate themselves and each other towards the greater good of their facility, community and industry.

**Objective:** What new, sustained or improved tools is your facility implementing to develop the careers of current employees, enhance employee morale, buy-in and ownership of the facility and events, and recruit new employees into the industry? Include numbers and/or percentage as quantifiers when applicable.

### **Examples:**

- a) Mentoring programs.
- b) Sending employees to The League or other professional education programs.
- c) Internal professional development and team building programs.
- d) Communication tools utilized to inspire and motivate employees.
- e) Connections with schools through internships, volunteer or outreach programs.
- f) New formats/approaches to staff training.
- g) New recognition or incentive programs for staff performance.

## **Safety and Security**

**Statement:** As public assembly facility managers, your first and foremost responsibility is to provide a safe and secure environment for the public, employees and equine/agricultural stock. To achieve this it is the responsibility of each facility to have an active and ongoing safety program. By providing a safe and secure facility, you gain the public's trust and infuse your facility into the fabric of your community.

**Objective:** To provide a safe and secure environment, facilities should have a safety plan that covers a range of topics, including but not limited to:

- a) Training for staff and risk management plans.
- b) Emergency plans including incident, medical and security operations.
- c) Severe weather/disaster relief plans that could include risk/host sheltering, shelter in place or mega sheltering plans.
- d) These plans must be living breathing documents with regular and routine updates to ensure information is current and address new issues as they arise. In-house training should also be conducted annually (at a minimum) to keep procedures fresh.

**Examples:**

- a) An event or activity that successfully tested existing plans or led to the implementation of new plans to ensure proper execution of the event.
- b) Innovative concepts in your facility's in-house training plan.
- c) Innovative concepts to demonstrate how your facility partners with local emergency responders.
- d) How your facility has reached out in a time of need to play the role of a shelter.
- e) How your facility's risk management plan is implemented and developed to mitigate potential concerns.
- f) Testimonials (as applicable) from local law enforcement, emergency responders, OSHA, etc. Include any testimonials with your application; however, testimonials will not count towards the 500 word maximum.

**Service to the Community**

**Statement:** Equine and agricultural facilities are most effective and successful when they serve identified community needs. Facility excellence is achieved by being instrumentally involved in the local community through special programs, projects or initiatives that raise the visibility and influence of the facility in the community.

**Objective:** How does your facility serve the community (national, regional and local)? How is your facility valued?

- a) Support of non-profit and community service organizations, either in the facility itself, by participation of staff individually or as a group in community projects.
- b) Economic impact of your facility on the local community.
- c) Other community needs addressed.

**Examples:**

- a) Public/private partnerships for community action projects.
- b) Number and type of projects.
- c) Percentage of staff participation.
- d) Recognitions received by the community.
- e) Estimated economic impact for the community.



## FACILITY OF THE YEAR AWARD

### **Concluding Summary**

Provide a 300 word summary of why your facility should be awarded The League's Facility of the Year Award.

### **Selection:**

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by The League's Awards Committee. The Awards Committee shall be led by The League Board Chair with two additional board members. Should any League board members apply for the award, they must recuse themselves from the selection process. Recommendations by the Awards Committee will be presented to the full Board of Directors for final selection. No more than one award will be presented per year. The Board of Directors reserves the right, in its sole discretion, not to issue the award in any year if it is determined no application submitted reaches the level of excellence expected.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION SUBMISSION IS SEPTEMBER 30 FOR THE AWARD TO BE PRESENTED AT THE LEAGUE'S ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM THE FOLLOWING JANUARY.

**APPLICATION**

Facility Name:

How many years has the facility been a member of The League?

How many years has the facility been in operation?

Number of equine events held at the facility in the last complete year:

Number of non-equine events held at the facility in the last complete year:

Please give a brief description of the facility including, but not limited to, acreage, number of stalls, number and types of arenas and any other buildings at the facility (*attach additional pages if necessary*) :

Check if attached:

\_\_\_\_\_ Operational Excellence narrative

\_\_\_\_\_ Team Building/Professional Development narrative

\_\_\_\_\_ Safety and Security narrative

\_\_\_\_\_ Service to the Community narrative

\_\_\_\_\_ Summary narrative

\_\_\_\_\_ Photos in proper resolution and format

\_\_\_\_\_ Testimonials if applicable

All the above items must be attached to this application. Read all the requirements carefully before submitting the application. Deadline for submission is September 30 for an award to be presented at The League's Annual Symposium the following January.

Submitted by:

Title:

Date: